(c) whether Government is aware that major airports face threats of terrorism;

(d) whether Government has reviewed preparedness of different layers of security mechanism at the airports and also in the air space;

(e) whether his Ministry has any coordination with Air Force in this regard; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The following additional security measures have been taken:-

(i) NAKAS are put by CISF/State Police at the approach roads to airports for random checking of vehicles/persons/articles;

(ii) All unattended articles are being reported and checked for IED etc.;

(iii) Surveillance/watch both on City side and airside of the airports has been enhanced;

(iv) Perimeter Patrolling and guarding of funnel area during operational hours are intensified;

(v) All access control points are reinforced;

(vi) QRTs/Striking Reserve at airports are strengthened;

(vii) Secondary Security Checks at ladder point of aircraft is being introduced at all airports.

(viii) A thorough and complete screening of both hold and hand baggage is being carried out.

(c) to (e) Yes, Sir.

(f) Since the information is related to security, it would not be appropriate to divulge that in public-interest.

Air connectivity of North-East Region

2347. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of flights between Kolkata and different cities and towns of North Eastern States and between Guwahati and different North Eastern States as run by Air India;

(b) the number of flights from Kolkata and Guwahati to other places of the North East as run by airlines other than Air India;

(c) whether Government has identified the tourist places in the North East and also in other parts of the country to cover by air-travels, where road-journey is difficult; and

(d) the plan of Government to replace the outdated aircrafts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) National Aviation Company of India Limited and its subsidiary Alliance Air operate 63 flights

per week from Kolkata and 32 flights per week from Guwahati to different cities and towns of North Eastern States.

(b) Private scheduled airlines *viz* Jet Airways, JetLite, Kingfisher Airlines, Kingfisher Red, Spicejet and Indigo operate 114 flights/Week from Kolkata and 52 flights/week from Guwahati to different cities and towns of North Eastern States.

(c) Government has laid down Route Dispersal Guidelines with a view to achieve better regulation of air transport services taking into account the need for air transport services of different regions of the country including North-East region. It is, however, up to the airlines to provide air services to specific places depending upon the traffic demand and commercial viability. As such the airlines are free to operate anywhere in the country subject to compliance of Route Dispersal Guidelines issued by Government.

(d) National Aviation Company of India Limited and its subsidiary Air India Charters Limited has placed orders for purchase of 111 state-of-art new aircraft, with which the old aircraft in their fleet will be gradually replaced.

Renovation of Guwahati airport

2348. SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the component-wise progress made and target set for improvement as well as renovation of Lokpriya Gopi Nath Bordoloi (LGNB) Airport, Guwahati including the taxi parking, approach road as well as construction of Aero Bridge within the current financial year;

(b) the details of plan finalized, if any, for further strengthening and improvement of this airport; and

(c) the additional facilities created and proposed to be created to upgrade it to an international standard as well as to make it a functional regional hub of North Eastern Region (NER)?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The works undertaken for modernization/improvement of Lokpriya Gopinath Bardoloi International (LGBI) Airport, Guwahati with their status are:

(i) Air/city side canopy-completed. (ii) VIP Lounge in arrival hall-Already completed. (iii) Development of approach road-Completed. (iv) Expansion of taxi parking area-Work completed to the extent of 95% with expected date of completion by end December 2008. (v) Installation of passenger boarding bridges-Expected date of completion by end March 2009. (vi) Extension of runway by 360 meters and construction of new apron with link taxiway-81% of the work completed and expected date of completion is end December 2008. (vii) Construction of isolation bay-50% of the work has been completed and expected date of completion is end March 2009.